

The NewsBreaker

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEWS WITH NEW PRINCIPAL + ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL!

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Leadership in Education: An Interview with Mr. O'Meara



By Tony Gabrik, Class of 2026

As the new school year begins, Pacific Grove High School is under the leadership of a new principal, Mr. O'Meara. After five successful years at Soquel High, he is ready to lead PGHS through an exciting academic year. Mr. O'Meara shared his vision "to increase student achievement" and reflected on what makes PGHS special in an interview with our school paper.

Q: What are your main goals for the school year?

A: This year I aim to increase student achievement and learning by focusing on three main avenues. Those are community, collaboration, and connectedness.

After discussing his goals for the year, Mr. O'Meara shared his thoughts on the atmosphere of PGHS.

Q: What are your thoughts on the student culture at PGHS?

A: I think that the school spirit, cohesion of each class, and traditions are some of the best parts of this school. I hope that we can all come together to form a whole school community.

While leadership brings many challenges, Mr. O'Meara highlighted what he finds most fulfilling as a principal.

Q: What is the best part of being a principal?

A: The best part without a doubt is being part of a team. This position gives me a lot of connections that I enjoy having.

Along with his focus on academics and community, Mr. O'Meara is enthusiastic about getting involved in the wider aspects of student life, including activities outside the classroom.

Q: Do you plan to be involved with student extracurriculars?

A: Most definitely. I enjoyed the high school experience when in high school, and I plan to be present and visible for this school's events.

To conclude the interview, Mr. O'Meara turned the conversation back to the students, leaving us with one final question:

Mr. O'Meara: What does it mean to you to "be a Breaker?"

Reply with your answer in a *NewsBreaker* survey coming soon!



Photo courtesy of Meredith Evans

An Interview With Our New Vice Principal, Mr. Keller



By Conor O'Brien, Class of 2026

Mr. Keller is our new assistant principal here at Pacific Grove High School. In hopes of learning more about his plans for this school year and what he wants to have an impact on at the school, the *NewsBreaker* staff got in touch with him for an interview.

Culture: Regarding the type of culture Mr. Keller hopes to foster here at the high school, he said he wants to make sure everyone is included, respected, and welcome, regardless of any differences. He also highlighted how he wants everyone to challenge themselves, strive for excellence, and adapt to the changes we face from day to day.

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Changes: When asked about any changes or improvements to the schools that he wants to work on or help adjust, he mentioned two primary things, one about our curriculum and one regarding our campus. Firstly, the classes we offer that work to prepare students for both college and primarily jobs, should be redesigned in his eyes. Both students and future job changes, predictions, and adjustments should guide how we design aspects of the school's curriculum. The second group of ideas was more focused on parts of our campus. He strongly believes that the PG Skate Park should be located on our campus. These debates have been a point of contention in the community in the past years and it should be interesting to see if the idea comes to fruition. He also mentioned a possible playground or recreational area on the campus.

Administrative Differences: Prior to working here at the high school, Mr. Keller was the principal at Robert Down Elementary. When asked if there are any differences between the roles or customs at the different schools, he stated that there were not many stark contrasts, quoting the American author Robert Fulghum on the importance of kindergarten. Students in and of themselves are students regardless of their age, so leading a classroom or being a principal at different age levels has minor differences, but is very similar in essence.

Community: Mr. Keller's main desire for the school regarding the community was for there to be more spirit. He mentioned how being an activities director helped him to grow his passion for school spirit and pride. He encouraged everyone to work towards finding their passions here at PGHS, encouraging the joining of clubs and the support for all student endeavors. If every student can engage in an activity here at the school, there will be more cohesion, support, and pride in the school's community.

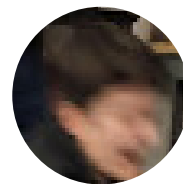
Messages/Closing thoughts: To conclude the interview, Mr. Keller was asked if there were any questions or messages for the student body that he wanted to share. He had one primary and important message to spread: try your best and don't always expect perfection. No one else expects you to be perfect, so cut yourself some slack, and get back on the horse if you fail. He also told everyone to have fun while you are a kid, don't try to be a grown up before your time, take reasonable risks, and be yourself.

This interview hopefully provided a better understanding and insight into Mr. Keller's hopes for the school, and inspired students to try new things.



Photos courtesy of Bodhi Martinez and Grace Gorman

New Clubs Coming to PG High



By Warren Frasenyak, Class of 2025

Club Rush is a yearly tradition at Pacific Grove High School in which representatives from each club set up tables in Main Hall and represent their clubs to the student body, giving students the chance to sign up for whatever activities they want. In addition to the clubs we know and love, a few new clubs will be joining the campus this year.

Science Olympiad is coming to Pacific Grove High School. The Science Olympiad is a nationwide competition for students in different scientific areas, where they answer trivia questions and conduct experiments to demonstrate their knowledge. The club meets Tuesdays at lunch in Mrs. D'Amico's room.

Battle of the Books is starting this year. In Battle of the Books, teams of students read novels and eventually compete for prizes in the library. Battle of the Books will take place Tuesdays at lunch in the library.

The **Badminton Club** is opening as a place for students of all abilities to develop their skills and compete in friendly tournaments. Badminton Club meets every other Wednesday at lunch in the small gym, starting on the 18th.

The **Crochet Club** is beginner-friendly crochet and knitting club that offers a space to meet and work on projects while watching movies together. Crochet club meets Thursdays during lunch in Ms. Hall's room.

Wince and Repeat, Pacific Grove High's Improv club, is returning to our school. Wince and Repeat will help students develop their improvisation skills and build up to one show each semester, the first of which will occur in mid-October. Improv club meets Fridays during lunch in Sea Wing Theater.

The Green Club is another organization coming back to PG High School. Members will engage in local cleanups, create donation drives, and try their hand at upcycled crafts. Proceeds from the metal straws in the Student Store will fund the Green Club. The club meets Fridays at lunch in Ms. Mello's room.

If any of these clubs pique your interest, make sure to sign up for them during Club Rush. Watch for the NewsBreaker's coverage of the event next issue!

Special thanks to Amy Kim (Class of 2026) for helping out with research!

Back to School Dance Kicks Off New School Year



By Lilah Del Castillo, Class of 2027

On August 16th, excited students gathered in the breezeway for the annual Back to School Dance! The dance was neon themed, and the breezeway was decorated with neon lights and streamers! Students arrived in neon attire, complete with bright face paint to finish the look. The dance had high energy the whole time, and there were even tables set up for the students to dance on. The music was a mix of rap, slow songs, pop, and more, which the students enjoyed! Overall, the 2024 Back to School Dance was one for the books, and I'm already excited for the next one!

Breaker Back to School

By Jonah De Leon, Class of 2027

With the class schedules being finalized, school sports beginning their official events, and the first month of school winding down overall, the *NewsBreaker* staff wanted to know what the student body did over their summer.

We polled 194 students, with most responses coming from the Freshman class with 85, around 44% of our survey. A vast majority of students, around 77%, stated that they greatly enjoyed their summer by giving it a rating of 4 or 5 out of 5. Daren Light (10) said, "This summer couldn't have been better!"

When asked what part of summer people enjoyed the most, the obvious like "going to the beach" or "hanging out with friends" were mentioned. Warren Frasenyak (12), said "I didn't really do much, I took an MPC class, and hung out with friends." However, we also saw a large number of students who traveled to locations worldwide. Destinations like Italy, Albania, Croatia, France, Hawaii, Japan, the Netherlands, Mexico, Germany, Scotland, Seattle, Florida, Las Vegas, and Alaska were all mentioned as places visited by students this summer. Freshman Bodhi Martinez described visiting the Cal Poly-SLO campus, while others enjoyed activities at home, basking in the fog, like golfing, volunteering at summer camps, and practicing sports like baseball, basketball, football, volleyball, soccer, and cross country. Amy Kim (11) brought up her job as a camp counselor with Monterey Recreation as a primary event during her summer.

When questioned about something unique they did over the summer, we received another wide array of responses. Again, a lot of students listed places they visited and things they did there like seeing grizzly bears, camping on Catalina Island, riding on cruises and yachts, kayaking, ziplining, rock climbing, camping, and eating escargot. Ryder Gamecho (10) remembered, "I went to my great-grandma's 100th birthday and met 100 cousins on my mom's side". Some people attended concerts to see acts like Niall Horan, Noah Kahan, and Taylor Swift, while others went to summer camps. Some students also continued their education in the form of dual enrollment classes at schools like MPC and UC Santa Cruz.

74% of the students said they were enjoying the school year so far and most people said they were looking forward to their respective sports seasons, school dances, upcoming breaks, and a new list of classes. Ersi Kullolli (11) said, "I'm looking forward to sports, and the Shoe Game specifically". A lot of seniors also mentioned activities exclusive to their grade like the Disneyland trip, senior assassins, and graduation.

Overall, the student body enjoyed a fun, satisfying, and memorable summer and we hope our school year will be something of the same.



The BreakerBots Prepare for the New School Year



By Matthew An, Class of 2027

Pacific Grove High School's robotics team, the BreakerBots, prepares for the new school year with the new incoming class of freshmen, the Class of '28. The BreakerBots hope to recruit new freshmen, including any returning grades (sophomores, juniors, and seniors), in preparation for the new school year and the kickoff to the build season for FRC (First Robotics Competition) in January 2025 to join their robotics program where fundamental skills come into play. The incorporation of things like CAD (Computer Aided Design) and computer science (Javascript), including the use and knowledge of CNC (Computer Numerical Control) manufacturing greatly contributed to the success of the team last year and will roll over to the new school year. New students who are experienced when it comes to these components are welcomed including those who are new to it. The robotics team offers many opportunities for new joining students to master these skills through their summer programs where computer science and CAD are taught. These programs often last two months and go through the introduction of computer science (using the language Javascript) where students code, or the introduction of CAD (using the program Fusion 360) where they can precisely measure out and make objects.

Mrs. Richmond, a PGHS teacher and a BreakerBots coach, offers her own classes where she teaches students about the fundamentals of CAD and computer science. She has a three year engineering program for students who are interested in CAD and CNC manufacturing while she offers two computer science classes (one being in the language Python, and the other in Javascript). The BreakerBots team aims to provide a learning experience for newcomers in order for their skills to be used in benefit and hopes to have a continuation for those who have already been introduced to the topic. Support our team by joining and becoming a member of the BreakerBots today!



Student Voices: Breaking Down the Pulse of PGHS

By Alison Gerow, Autumn Bagwell, and Samantha O'Brien, Class of 2025

As the school year progresses, the voices of the student body at PGHS are more important than ever. To foster connection and reflect on the student experience, we recently interviewed our peers with questions aimed at uncovering needs, wants, and whimsical thoughts about life at our school. Here's what we gathered from students across all grades. Starting with #Course Offerings and Academic Experiences!

Are there any electives you wish were available at school?

Some students expressed a desire for "more creative electives," such as classes like cosmetology, including "skin care use for students to learn proper hygiene," said Freshman Shae O'Roy-Baptista, and a Mechanics class because "it could be useful for the future of some students reaching for certain careers." - Junior Ayden Knab



What was the experience like in an honors class compared to a regular class?

Students conveyed mixed feelings, with some finding honors classes to be significantly more challenging but also more rewarding. "The discussions are deeper and more engaging, but they can also be stressful," noted Senior McKenzie Mitchell.

If your school had a mascot that was an animal, which would you choose and why?

Responses varied wildly, with favorites including a "dolphin in the wave" by junior Ricardo Sanchez. Another senior, Abigail Eubanks, suggested "a husky, because they are very beautiful." "And perhaps an octopus," said Senior Alison Gerow.



What is the funniest thing that happened to you at school?

"When my android battery fell out when I dropped my phone" - Senior Elias Jones

"They brought me to the office because they thought I was vandalizing the bathroom," said Junior Eddie Robbins.

"Everyone laughed when I broke my ankle in P.E." said Sophomore Cameron Navarro.

Should there be more support for students struggling academically?

“I think there needs to be better environments to make kids in PGHS feel more supported both academically and mentally- some students would benefit from accommodations such as fidget toys and slime,” said sophomore Grace Miller.



#Fun Questions



If you could travel back to one year in PGHS, which year would you pick and why?

“Freshman year, because my brother Kaleb was in the 12th grade.” - Senior Rogan Kuska
Another said freshman year, because “I miss all the chaos of being a new student, even if it was scary at first.” - Senior Alison Gerow



#School Culture and Community

Should lunchtime games/spirit week be mandatory?

A majority of students sided with the idea of making these events mandatory. “They really bring the school together,” remarked Senior Autumn Bagwell. A little friendly competition and school spirit can make a huge difference in our community. “It depends on the kind of spirit week” said Junior Alex Giammanco, and another opinion was “No, because not everyone wants to do them.” - Sophomore Simone Misawa-Salzmann

Should there be new student meet-ups?

Absolutely! Students emphasized the importance of inclusivity and making new students feel welcome. “It’s daunting to be the new kid. Having meet-ups can help ease that,” stated Senior Samantha O’Brien.

How do peer relationships influence your experience at school?

“It depends on who you surround yourself with.” - Senior, Isis Snyder
“It makes me more excited to come to school,” said Junior Nicholas Papp.
“If you hang around the right people it will be a better experience,” said Junior Katie Eubanks. “People are socially awkward at this school, like super cliquey; they can fix that by getting over their embarrassment,” said gorgeous Senior Alice Anderson.

If you could change places with a teacher for a day, who would it be and what would you do?

Many students expressed interest in switching places with their favorite teachers to experience life on the other side. “I’d pick Chef Erickson so I can cook,” said Freshman Katelyn Aquino.

What is the most bizarre, funniest rumor that you’ve heard about the school?

“That we will win the shoe,” said Junior Bradley Stade.
“The freshman bathroom (B) is the bathroom dedicated to vaping,” stated Freshman Kaylee Rhames.



These responses encapsulate the vibrant and diverse experiences of PGHS students. As our school continues to evolve, it's clear that student voices play a crucial role in shaping our community. Let's keep the conversation going and make PGHS even better together!

Stay tuned for more insights in our upcoming editions, and don't forget to engage with your classmates! Your thoughts matter! What are your thoughts on these issues? Reach out to the PGHS News Breaker Team with your opinions and ideas!



From Beyond PGHS

What in the World?



By Daren Light, Class of 2027

As school begins, many events continue to happen globally, and *The NewsBreaker* is committed to bring content and stories from around the world.

Following the worst drought of the century and major food insecurity, Namibia has declared a state of emergency. Nearly half the population is suffering, and the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism in Namibia has come to an unfortunate, but necessary solution. They are planning to kill over 700 animals for their meat, including elephants, buffalo, hippos, and zebras. The ministry has decided that the best course of action is to provide the meat to those who are in need.

In Paris, the CEO and developer of the popular messaging app, Telegram, was arrested for allowing criminal activity on his app. In the app, people can message each other one on one, or in a group chat. Telegram offers end-to-end encryption, where the user may turn on a feature making their messages impossible to track. Because of this, illegal activities such as child exploitation, drug trafficking, and money laundering have flourished, and criminals have exploited the platform to communicate without immediate detection.

In Timor-Leste, or East Timor, a country in southeast Asia, a visit from Pope Francis is expected soon. Nearly \$18 million (USD) have been spent in preparation for his arrival. However, in a controversial move, the government has evicted almost 90 people from their homes which were demolished. Many people were not able to take their belongings, and these families were forced to find other places to live with the ~\$7000 USD the government provided. Unfortunately, another roughly 1300 people will also face the same injustice. The country's government insists that the destruction has nothing to do with the Pope's arrival.

A Norwegian princess is set to marry a U.S. shaman. After many years of ups and downs, the decision has finally been made. The shaman, Mr. Verrett has "said very strange things and there are many cultural differences," according to a royal correspondent for Norway. The issue is the conflict between Princess Martha Louise's royal status and her marriage to Mr. Verrett, whose beliefs have raised concerns. The king, her father, emphasizes she will need to separate her title from her commercial activities, or she will lose it. Mr. Verrett posted on social media, "We're (as a couple) going more global and there's nothing more powerful than the love that fuels us."

On September 10th, Donald Trump and Kamala Harris are set to have a presidential debate in Philadelphia. The last debate between Donald Trump and President Joe Biden was a key factor in Biden dropping out of the race. Vice President Harris will be debating Trump for the first time this week, and the event is expected to draw significant attention as the two face off in what could be a pivotal moment in the election campaign.

Car Week Brings Excitement to the Monterey area



By Andrew Atanous, Class of 2026

Did you know that Monterey Car Week isn't actually a week long? In reality, it is around nine days long. This year it was from Friday, August 9 - Sunday, August 18, 2024. Monterey Car Week began in 1950 when the main car show, Concours D'Elegance, first started. Every year, car enthusiasts from all across the world come to visit this show among others. Some other popular shows include the Legends of the Autobahn, Concorso Italiano, Exotics on Broadway. Legendary car manufacturer Koenigsegg is celebrating its 30th anniversary, and visited Exotics on Broadway with Christian and Halldora von Koenigsegg with his wife driving the 1/70 Koenigsegg CC850, which boasts a 1:1 power to weight ratio!

A tragic car crash on August 19, 2024 caused a horrible accident, where the 1979 Ford Ghia Probe 1 Concept Car valued at approximately \$1,000,000 was left engulfed in flames after being in a trailer headed home on Highway 1. Monterey Car Week always brings thrills, and this year did not disappoint!



1/28 at this time Koenigsegg Jesko Attack at Exotics on Broadway in Seaside (\$3,000,000)

PG High's Fakest News Source Has Returned...



THE EGGPLANT

The Danger of Clubs



By Mayday Follen,
The PGHS Eggplant

Clubs, the key to high school social expression. Everyone has joined at least one in their time at PGHS, some even lead these organizations. Many clubs on our campus are student led groups, wonderfully diverse in their topics. Improv Club, the Rainbow Alliance, Art Club. All are easy pathways to meeting like-minded students while still maintaining the freedom of interests.

However, some of these clubs are too like-minded. In fact, we here at the PGHS Eggplant have had the misfortune of nearly being infiltrated too, though we had prepared for this unfortunate event. So, it is with a heavy heart that I must give this PSA to all our students.

Beasts of a hivemind, known as mindflayers, have started to attack club members to add them to their single mind. Most often, these mindflayers attack club authorities, namely the presidents or treasurers to ensure the club cannot run without them. Though, other members are not safe either. The creatures have also begun a strategy of working bottom-up, slowly claiming individuals before finally swaying club officers to join the mind without force.

Mac, an officer of a club which they'd like to keep classified, had an encounter with one of the mindflayers just last night. According to them, "mindflayers are some form of supernatural thing, all tentacle-y and purple-ish. Very tall. And, really, just so dang scary it's unfair. One tried to eat my brain while I was walking home because I refused to eat a worm. I don't wanna know what was with the worm, I think it was diseased."

Beware these beasts, dear Pagrovians. Do not tell strangers your position in your club. Do not allow yourself to be tempted by the ease of leading one mind. Most importantly, do not accept strange worms.

Stay safe.



Don't miss this special message from the T.A.S.K. club!

WALK for WATER Walk-a-Thon

Together **A**chieving **S**uccessful **K**indness



The T.A.S.K. lunchtime club invites YOU to join us

When: Saturday, September 28th at 10:00 a.m.

Where: Starting point, the round-about parking area behind the culinary room.

Register now and start getting your pledges - see the QR CODE for information and how to get the plead sheet.

The joy and challenge will be to get pledges and or sponsors before the walk, then on the day of this fun event, you will carry a container of water, the size of your choice with the amount of water of your choice on the **BREAKER MILE** and get all that water back to the garden, You will empty the water into our new water container in the garden, and enjoy the fun thereafter.

From seed to success you can be a part of something very big in helping to raise the "FUNdraiser thermometer". Help fill the water container to meet our goal of 125 gallons of water, and the funds you earn will *help us, help others, including YOU!*

Many children worldwide carry water for miles for drinking and the basic needs of their families. One mile is a short distance in comparison to what so many do!

Check-in at 9:45 a.m. at the round-about parking area behind the culinary room.

You will pick the size of your water container, fill it with the amount of water you want to carry with ounces, ½ gallon, gallon, or challenge yourself with a bucket...whatever you choose, then start your walk.

You will also get a "passport" to carry along with your water container on the mile as there will be educational booths along the way of information and swag for all participants to learn about water and the world around us. You will get a "stamp" on your passport at each booth as you take one step at a time and leave a big footprint on our campus.

This joyful event will include music, fun, and food when you have completed the walk.

All proceeds will help fund **1) The upkeep of our social/emotional garden 2) P.G.H.S.Senior Scholarships at the end of the school year 3) Youth mental wellness 4) Community projects with Youth Homeless Programs 5) Foster Youth programs 6) Human trafficking education 6) Support projects in Nicaragua.**

All just to name a few areas where our T.A.S.K. club shares *KINDNESS*.



Scan the QR code for more details and to register for the event.

Start getting your pledges and or sponsors now and **help us help others.**

Thank you for *YOUR KINDNESS!*

Your participation will **MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE ONE STEP AT A TIME!**

Please see Ms. Gamecho in the attendance office if you have any questions.